

Traverse County Commission
Regular Board Meeting
May 19, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Commission Chair Jerrel Olson. Other Commissioners present were Dwight Nelson, Chad Metz, Kayla Schmidt, and Mark Gail. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The agenda was unanimously approved by a motion from Gail, seconded by Metz with the following additions: a quote for a hanging bracket for the Owl and Ottertail. No conflicts of interest were declared. The May 5, 2026 Board minutes were unanimously approved by a motion from Nelson, seconded by Schmidt.

Highway

County Engineer Chad Gillespie and Highway Supervisor Brian Koch appeared before the Board to provide a department update. On a motion by Gail, seconded by Metz, the Board unanimously approved the final SP 078-615-017 to Mark Sand and Gravel for \$23,471.25. Gillespie went over the following informational items: 2027 equipment needs include a Tandem Plow/Gravel Truck. Approval will be needed by June 16, 2026 in order to get the 2026 price which will be billed in 2027. Updates at the County Park, it has been striped and handicap signs have been installed. Dust control is scheduled for May 26, and the precon for the box culverts project is May 12. Gillespie also provided a CSAH 9 update along with information regarding hauling crushed concrete.

Western Prairie Human Services

Human Services Director Stacy Hennen appeared before the Board to discuss the draft lease agreement. Western Prairie Human Services wanted to enter into leases with all three of their counties so they can ensure a clear and equitable vision of how the property is used, who is responsible for what tasks and jobs and to ensure that all three counties have the same understanding and are being treated the same. They also wanted to equalize the formula by which they are paying rent. Upon a motion by Nelson and seconded by Schmidt the lease was approved unanimously.

Auditor/Treasurer

Auditor/Treasurer Kit Johnson appeared before the Board with a department update. He updated the Board on taxes, inventory, elections, and the audit. Dumont Tri-County's tobacco license was renewed upon a motion by Schmidt and seconded by Gail and unanimously approved.

County Coordinator

Upon a motion by Schmidt and seconded by Metz, the following bills were approved unanimously.

AMERICAN SOLUSTIONS FOR BUSINESS	\$2,135.82
CITY OF BROWNS VALLEY	\$2,863.22
MORRIS ELECTRONICS	\$2,063.17
SUMMIT FIRE PROTECTION	\$2,089.45
MINNEWASKA COMMUNITY HEALTH SERV	\$15,383.30

Per M.S. 375.12, the number of claims totaling \$2,000.00 or less were 24 in the amount of \$8,605.10.

There was a change to the phones discussed at the last meeting. County Coordinator Lisa Zahl had a discussion with IT regarding the phones that had been selected, as there were some complaints from other counties regarding the less expensive option. Because of this, we received a new quote for all the same phones which increased the one-time cost for the phones to \$10,499.83. The monthly cost did not change. The new quote was approved unanimously upon a motion by Metz and seconded by Nelson.

The Commissioners received the 2025 Opioid Summary Report that Horizon Public Health put together for all 5 counties. Zahl presented a quote for a bracket to hang the owl in the Commissioners room. It is \$108.55, and there was censuses among the Commissioners to go ahead a purchase the bracket. OtterTail Power Company filed a request with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission to increase electric rates for their Minnesota customers. There is a public hearing scheduled for June 2026 or the County can submit a written comment regarding the increase. The Commissioners asked that Zahl write a letter asking that the rates do not increase.

Public Comment Period

A comment was received regarding concerns about current and proposed watershed drainage projects occurring upstream in Stevens County which will increase and accelerate water flow into Twelve Mile Creek in Traverse County. There was a lengthy discussion amongst the Commissioners. The Commissioners asked Zahl to put together a letter to send to Bois de Sioux Watershed and the Stevens County Commissioners regarding their concerns.

Committee Reports

Schmidt attended the AMC Cybersecurity training, Western Prairie Preplacement, Planning and Zoning and the MRC Legislative end-of-session meeting. Nelson attended the Horizon Performance Committee, PrimeWest, Horizon Public Health and MRC.

Olson adjourned the meeting at 9:46 a.m.

Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

Jerrel Olson, Chair